(b) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under the review process of National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) it has been felt to make further improvement in the features of NAIS so as to make it farmer's friendly.

It is proposed to replace the existing Seed Act, 1966, seeds Rules 1968 and Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 with new legal instruments to provide for compulsory registration of seed varieties and enhancement of penalty for major and minor infringements.

Use of Organic Fertilizer

1028. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are encouraging the use of organic fertilizers in preference to nitrogen-based fertilizers; and

(b) whether it is planned to establish organic based fertilizer plants in Government sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The Government is promoting Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) which includes soil test based balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizers including nitrogen based fertilizers in conjunction with organic fertilizers like Farm Yard Manure, green manure, phospho compost, vermin-compost and bio-fertilizers etc. for sustaining soil health and productivity.

(b) The Government is providing financial assistance for setting up of compost plants for conversion of city-waste into compost (organic manure) under Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilizers" which has since been subsumed with Macro Management Scheme.

The "National Project on Organic Farming" is under the process of approval for production, promotion, market development and certification of organic produce during Xth Plan, which includes provision of financial assistance for setting up of organic input production units of Fruits &

Vegetabis waste Compost, Biofertilizers production and Hatcheries for vermiculture etc.

Status of Litchi Development and Research Centre

†1029. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the up-to -date position of Litchi Development and Research Centre to be established in Mujaffarpur of Bihar; and

(b) by when, it would start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The National Research Centre for Litchi established in Mujaffarpur, Bihar in 2002 is already functioning.

Promoting Cold Water Fisheries

1030. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the measures being taken for increasing production of cold water fisheries;

(b) whether Government have assessed the capacity of the production of the said variety on the basis of the survey of various hill States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken for encouraging the production of such variety offish in the States which are yielding lesser than their capacity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) On the basis of vast and varied cold water fishery resources available in the country, the Government launched a pilot scheme on Development of Coldwater Fisheries and Aquaculture in Hill Regions with 100% central assistance in the States of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Uttaranchal in the terminal year of Ninth Plan (2001-02), The pilot scheme was implemented by the respective states with the technical support from the concerned fishery institute of ICAR.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.